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LARSON STATEMENT ON THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

WASHINGTON, D.C.- "It is clear that some very difficult decisions await the President, the Congress and the nation in the months ahead. The bulk of this session of Congress will likely be focused on possible military conflict and the economy.

"With regard to the situation surrounding Iraq, I continue to believe that the U.S. going it alone against Iraq militarily is not in our nation's best interest. It is a departure of more than 50 years of a successful policy of containment, deterrence and diplomacy. We must work to build an international coalition, let the U.N. inspections run their course and continue to pressure Iraq to disarm. I applaud Colin Powell for the leadership he has shown and hope that he is able to bring about a resolution.

"Our greatest domestic concern is clearly the state of our economy, where a real stimulus plan is required to create jobs and reinvigorate our industries. Additional tax cuts that primarily benefit the wealthiest people in the country will not stimulate the economy, rather they will deepen our already massive budget deficit and curb our ability to meet the pressing needs of our nation, including prescription drug coverage for the elderly, preserving Social Security and Medicare as well as funding for areas such as education, local first responders and veterans," said Larson.

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